

RINGETTE NOVA SCOTIA U14 COMPETITIVE (A AND AA) PROGRAMS

DO WE NEED TO CHANGE?

- 1) Strategic Direction
 - “Ringette Nova Scotia is steadily increasing the number of Nova Scotians participating in stage appropriate ringette programs throughout the province, with a strong presence in educational institutions.” Vision | 2015
 - “Ringette Nova Scotia is developing athletes and teams that are excelling at the national and international level.” Vision | 2015
 - How will we get there? If we don’t change, will our outcomes change?

- 2) Competition Changes (precipitated by LTAD)
 - **Atlantic’s 2011 – provinces may enter up to 3 teams per division (imminent opportunity)**
 - Eastern’s – provincial discussions at meeting in June 2010 regarding what to do with the U14 division at this competition (either follow Western’s and eliminate the division or open it up to more teams)
 - Canadian Ringette Championships – will move to Open Concept beginning in 2012 to allow more teams opportunity to compete at this event
 - If we don’t change, will we be left behind?

- 3) Long Term Athlete Development
 - Does our current provincial athlete development model reflect the principles of Ringette Canada’s LTAD model?
 - Is it working for us?

WHAT DO RINGETTE NOVA SCOTIA’S U14 PROGRAMS LOOK LIKE NOW?

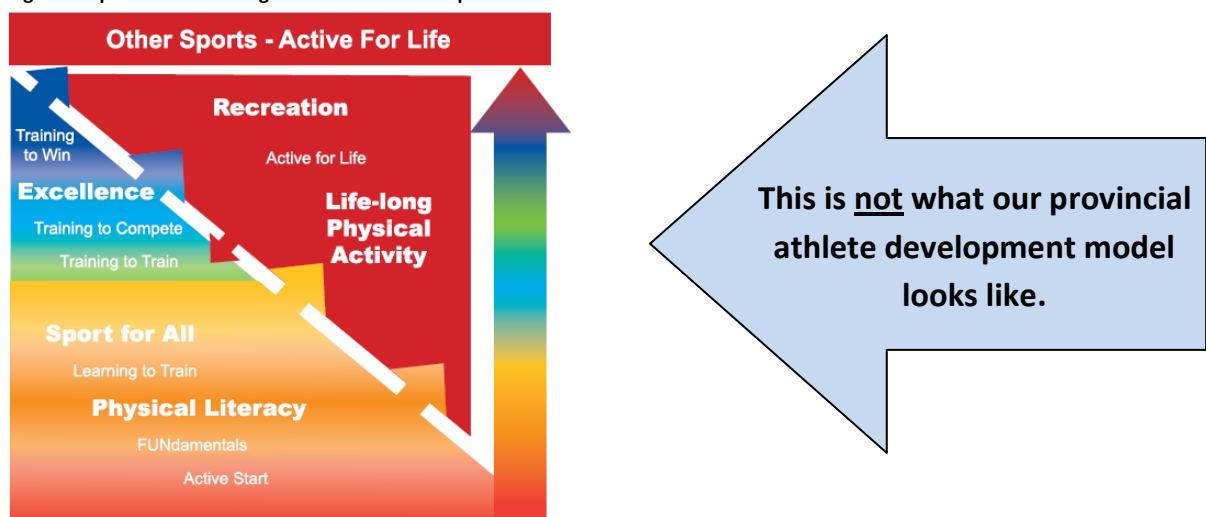
- 2009/10 – 150 players
- 2010/11 – 133 players if all return and no new registrations

	Nova Scotia U14 AA Team	Nova Scotia U14 A Team
Coaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for coaching applications in April • 3 person coaching staff selected in May/June 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call for coaching applications in April • Typically very few or no applications to coach this team (recruiting required)
Athlete Selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 ‘best’ players selected after 8-10 hours of tryouts at the start of the season (September) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Must attend U14 AA tryouts and be cut from that team before being named to ‘A’ team • Team is 17 ‘next best’ players
Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly on-ice training • Some dry land training • Some tournament play • Players also play on association teams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly on-ice training • Some dry land training • Some tournament play • Players also play on association teams
Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent NS at Atlantic’s in February • Represent NS at Eastern’s in April (ON, QC, NB, NS, PEI) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represent NS at Atlantic’s once every three years as the Host team (competing in the same division as NS AA and teams from NB and PEI)

THE BIG PICTURE – WHAT IS NOVA SCOTIA’S ATHLETE DEVELOPMENT MODEL

- We are placing more emphasis on basic skill development, physical literacy (and fun!) in U9, U10 and U12 programs – moving in the right direction, but still more work to be done
- House league programs offered from U10 to 18+
- U14 is the start and foundation of competitive programs in ringette....so we:
 - Identify 17 best athletes and 3 coaches to train and compete at the highest level (AA)
 - Identify 17 ‘next best’ athletes and 3 coaches to train at the second highest level (A), and compete at Atlantic’s against AA teams once every three years
- U16 AA, U19 AA and 18+ AA programs each involve 17 athletes/3 coaches – limited success at national competitions, player retention & coach recruitment challenges
- Recruitment of coaches and athletes for provincial U16A, U19A and 18+A teams when we are permitted Host teams in competitions
- 3 team Open A division that does not have a Provincial Championship and does not compete at any regional competition
- Canada Winter Games program puts strain on Provincial A and AA programs due to declining player registrations at U16, U19 and 18+

Figure 1: Sport Canada’s Long Term Athlete Development Model

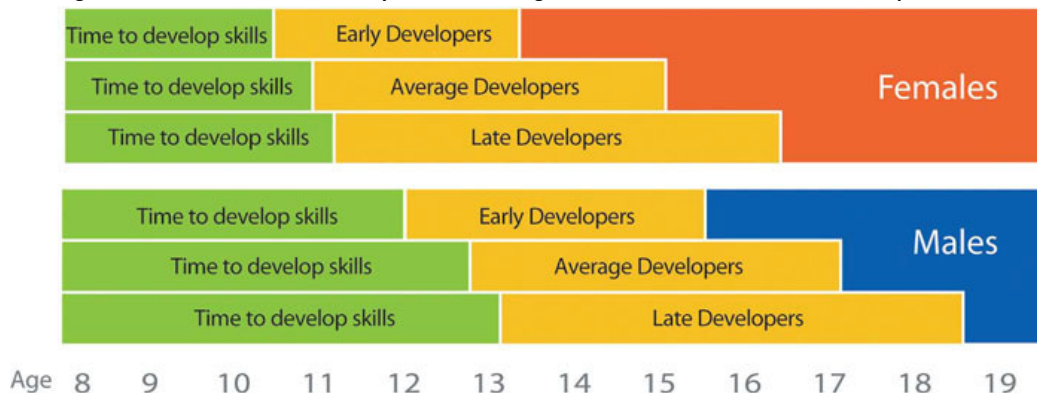


IS OUR MODEL SUSTAINABLE?

- In Nova Scotia 17 AA athletes selected per season per division – this is not a pyramid! (Figure 1)
- 3 coaches developing in the AA stream per season per division (U14 – 18+)
- Once athletes enter the AA stream at U14 they often remain a ‘AA’ player (especially if it is in their first year in the division)
 - 2008/09 NS U14 AA Team won Gold at Eastern’s! Where did they go in 2009/10?
 - 8 moved up to U16 AA
 - 1 moved up to U16 A
 - 6 remained in U14AA
 - 1 dropped out of competitive stream and played house league
 - 1 left the sport

- Difficult for ‘A’ players to enter the ‘AA’ stream. When they do it is typically in their 2nd year in a division and they often go back to playing ‘A’ when they move up a division. What does this tell us?
 - 2008/09 NS U14 A Team – Where did they go in 2009/10?
 - 0 moved up to U16 AA
 - 7 moved up to U16 A
 - 5 remained in U14 A
 - 5 moved to U14 AA
- Near impossible for players to enter ‘AA’ if they didn’t get into the competitive stream at all in U14.
- Why is all of this a problem?
 - Ringette Canada’s Long Term Athlete Development Framework says to “maintain a balance between participation and competition” at Training to Train stage (U14).
 - This is because...
 - In T2T stage females are at various stages of their growth spurt and there are wide variations in developmental age of athletes (up to 5 years)
 - Athletes who enter their growth spurt early (early developers) are bigger, stronger
 - Athletes who enter their growth spurt late experience a longer period of time that is optimal for the acquisition of skills (See Figure 2)
 - Late developers eventually catch up and pass early developers in physical development

Figure 2: Children Who Enter Puberty Late Have a Longer Time Period to Refine Fundamental Sport Skills



- By selecting only our top 17 athletes at U14 AA are we missing the opportunity to offer advanced training and competitive opportunities to first year and/or later developing athletes?
 - 2009/10 U14 AA Team birth years:
 - 15 born in 1996
 - 2 born in 1997
 - 2008/09 U14 AA Team birth years:
 - 10 born in 1995
 - 7 born in 1996
- By the time the late developing athletes complete their growth spurt, have they already ‘missed the boat’?

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

- When a player or coach who has trained and developed in the 'AA' stream leaves the sport at U16 or U19, who replaces them?
- With only one AA and A team per division in the province, how are these athletes and coaches experiencing meaningful competition? (by leaving the province; by playing up a division in house league)

Are we sacrificing long term vision...

(ie. robust programs, competitive leagues in some or all divisions, more talent from which to select CWG and teams competing at National's, more National Team athletes)

...for short term goals?

(ie. success in U14/U16 at Eastern's/Atlantic's)

WHAT IS HAPPENING IN OTHER PROVINCES?

Province	BC	AB	SK	MB	ON	QC	NB	NS	PEI
Registrations 09/10	2329	5324	1010	3013	9855	4655	1198	1077	382
U14 AA Teams	5	5	2	4			3	1	1
Ratio to Total Registrations	1:465	1:1064	1:505	1:753			1:399	1:1077	1:382
Competitions	▪ U14 division eliminated from Western Canadian Ringette Championships due to LTAD considerations				▪ Atlantic's being opened up to more teams ▪ Eastern's opened up to U16A and U19A; U14AA division under review				

"The habits we develop in becoming good are often the ones that prevent us from becoming great."

Tiger Woods

BENEFITS OF INCREASED COMPETITIVE TEAMS AT U14

- More coaches, athletes (and officials too!) experience heightened training opportunities and meaningful competition in the U14 division which is the primary intake for our entire competitive program in Nova Scotia.
- Decreased likelihood of late maturers missing out on competitive opportunity.
- Competitive teams of similar calibre in the same division can train and compete together
- Join other similarly sized provinces in offering broader opportunities at U14 where skill development and participation (not medals) are the primary goal – success at Eastern's and other competitions will be a 'happy coincidence' of a strong athlete development model.

WHY NOW?

- Our numbers are strong enough (see provincial comparison).
- Take advantage of opportunity at Atlantics 2011 to enter more than one team.
- What are we waiting for?